be awarded by October, 1996 and would be completed in 24 months from the date of award of the work.

Appointment of Chairman of Indian Bank

3516. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Bank has shown a loss of Rs. 1,336 crores in the year 1995-96; and

(b) whether the RBI had advised against the appointment and also the extension later of the then Chairman of this Bank in 1988?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No such advice appears to have been given by RBI in 1988.

Internet System in L.I.C. Branches

3517. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) in view of Government's decision to introduce modern information technology, how many LIC branches have been covered by Internet system;

(b) the reasons for not covering the remaining branches; and

(c) since how many months equipments purchased for above purpose are lying idle?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No branch of LIC has so far been covered by internet system.

(b) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.

(c) No equipment has been purchased by L.I.C. for internet system.

Safe Use of Amlo-Depin For Controlling Blood Pressure

3518. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Amlo-Depin is a safe drug lately developed from Calcigard group of medicines used for control of high-blood pressure, with little or no side affacts on the patient;

(b) whether it is also a fact that most of the drug manufacturers brought down the cost of the product to suit the common man's pocket;

(c) if so, which of the manufacturers have not agreed to bring it down to the popular level; and

(d) whether any subsidy is extended to drug companies manufacturing this drug in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) Amlo-Depin is a safe drug given orally for the control of blood pressure. Calcigard on the other hand, is one of the trade names of the well-known anti-hypertensive drug 'nifedipine'. The advantage of Amlo-Depin over Calcigard are the dosage schedule and lesser side effect.

(b) and (c) As per the information available, there has been a substantial reduction in the prices of most of formulations based on Amlodipine. These formulations, however, are outsides the purview of Drug Price Control Order, 1995.

(d) There is no scheme for giving subsidy for bulk drug manufacture.